

A L A S K A .

S P E E C H

OF

WILLIAM H. SEWARD,

AT

SITKA, AUGUST 12, 1869.

WASHINGTON, D. C.:
PHILP & SOLOMONS.
1869.

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SPEECH.

Citizens of Alaska, fellow-citizens of the United States:

You have pressed me to meet you in public assembly once before I leave Alaska. It would be sheer affectation to pretend to doubt your sincerity in making this request, and capriciously ungrateful to refuse it, after having received so many and varied hospitalities from all sorts and conditions of men. It is not an easy task, however, to speak in a manner worthy of your consideration, while I am living constantly on ship-board, as you all know, and am occupied intently in searching out whatever is sublime, or beautiful, or peculiar, or useful. On the other hand, it is altogether natural on your part to say, "You have looked upon Alaska, what do you think of it?" Unhappily I have seen too little of Alaska to answer the question satisfactorily. The entire coast line of the United States, exclusive of Alaska, is 10,000 miles, while the coast line of Alaska alone, including the islands, is 26,000 miles. The portion of the Territory which lies east of the peninsula, including islands, is 120 miles wide; the western portion, including Aleutian islands, expands to a breadth of 2,200 miles. The entire land area, including islands, is 577,390 statute square miles. We should think a foreigner very presumptuous who should presume to give the world an opinion of the whole of the United States of America, after he had merely looked in from his steamer at Plymouth and Boston harbor, or had ran up the Hudson river to the Highlands, or had ascended the

Delaware to Trenton, or the James river to Richmond, or the Mississippi no farther than Memphis. My observation thus far has hardly been more comprehensive. I entered the Territory of Alaska at the Portland canal, made my way through the narrow passages of the Prince of Wales archipelago, thence through Peril and Chatham straits and Lynn channel, and up the Chilcat river to the base of Fairweather; from which latter place I have returned through Clarence straits, to sojourn a few days in your beautiful bay, under the shadows of the Baranoff hills and Mount Edgecombe. Limited, however, as my opportunities have been, I will, without further apology, give you the impressions I have received.

Of course I speak first of the skies of Alaska. It seems to be assumed in the case of Alaska that a country which extends through 58 degrees of longitude, and embraces portions as well of the arctic as of the temperate zone, unlike all other regions so situated, has not several climates, but only one. The weather of this one broad climate of Alaska is severely criticised in outside circles for being too wet and too cold. Nevertheless it must be a fastidious person who complains of climates in which, while the eagle delights to soar, the humming-bird does not disdain to flutter. I shall speak only of the particular climate here which I know.

My visit here happens to fall within the month of August. Not only have the skies been sufficiently bright and serene to give me a perfect view, under the 60th parallel, of the total eclipse of the sun, and of the evening star at the time of the sun's obscuration, but I have also enjoyed more clear than there have been cloudy days, and in the early mornings and in the late

evenings peculiar to the season I have lost myself in admiration of skies adorned with sapphire and gold as richly as those which are reflected by the Mediterranean. Of all the moonlights in the world commend me to those which light up the archipelago of the North Pacific ocean. Fogs have sometimes detained me longer on the Hudson and on Long Island sound than now on the waters of the North Pacific. In saying this, I do not mean to say that rain and fog are unfrequent here. The Russian pilot, George, whom you all know, expressed my conviction on this matter exactly when he said to me, "Oh, yes, Mr. Seward, we *do* have changeable weather here sometimes, as they do in the other States." I might amend the expression by adding, the weather here is only a little more changeable. It must be confessed at least that it is an honest climate, for it makes no pretensions to constancy. If, however, you have fewer bright sunrises and glowing sunsets than southern latitudes enjoy, you are favored on the other hand with more frequent and more magnificent displays of the aurora and the rainbow. The thermometer tells the whole case when it reports that the summer is colder and the winter is warmer in Alaska than in New York and Washington. It results from the nature of such a climate that the earth prefers to support the fir, the spruce, the pine, the hemlock, and other evergreens, rather than deciduous trees, and to furnish grasses and esculent roots, rather than the cereals of drier and hotter climates. I have mingled freely with the multifarious population—the Tongass, the Stickeens, the Cakes, the Hydahs, the Sitkas, the Kootznoos, and the Chilcats, as well as with the traders, the soldiers, the seamen, and the settlers of various nationalities, English, Swedish, Russian, and

American—and I have seen all around me only persons enjoying robust and exuberant health. Manhood of every race and condition everywhere exhibits activity and energy, while infancy seems exempt from disease and age relieved from pain.

It is next in order to speak of the rivers and seas of Alaska. The rivers are broad, shallow, and rapid, while the seas are deep but tranquil. Mr. Sumner, in his elaborate and magnificent oration, although he spake only from historical accounts, has not exaggerated—no man can exaggerate—the marine treasures of the Territory. Beside the whale, which everywhere and at all times is seen enjoying his robust exercise, and the sea-otter, the fur-seal, the hair-seal, and the walrus, found in the waters which embosom the western islands, those waters as well as the seas of the eastern archipelago are found teeming with the salmon, cod, and other fishes adapted to the support of human and animal life. Indeed, what I have seen here has almost made me a convert to the theory of some naturalists, that the waters of the globe are filled with stores for the sustenance of animal life surpassing the available productions of the land.

It must be remembered that the coast range of mountains, which begins in Mexico, is continued into the Territory, and invades the seas of Alaska. Hence it is that in the islands and on the mainland, so far as I have explored it, we find ourselves everywhere in the immediate presence of black hills, or foot-hills, as they are variously called, and that these foot-hills are overtopped by ridges of snow-capped mountains. These snow-capped mountains are manifestly of volcanic origin, and they have been subjected, through an indefinite period, to atmospheric abrasion and disintegration.

Hence they have assumed all conceivable shapes and forms. In some places they are serrated into sharp, angular peaks, and in other places they appear architecturally arranged, so as to present cloud-capped castles, towers, domes, and minarets. The mountain sides are furrowed with deep and straight ravines, down which the thawing fields of ice and snow are precipitated, generally in the month of May, with such a vehemence as to have produced in every valley immense level plains of intervale land. These plains, as well as the sides of the mountains, almost to the summits, are covered with forests so dense and dark as to be impenetrable, except to wild beasts and savage huntsmen. On the lowest intervale land the cottonwood grows. It seems to be the species of poplar which is known in the Atlantic States as the Balm of Gilead, and which is dwarfed on the Rocky Mountains. Here it takes on such large dimensions, that the Indian shapes out of a single trunk even his great war canoe which safely bears over the deepest waters a phalanx of sixty warriors. These imposing trees always appear to rise out of a jungle of elder, alder, crab-apple, and other fruit-bearing shrubs and bushes. The short and slender birch, which, sparsely scattered, marks the verge of vegetation in Labrador, has not yet been reached by the explorers of Alaska. The birch tree sometimes appears here upon the river side, upon the level next above the home of the cottonwood, and is generally found a comely and stately tree. The forests of Alaska, however, consist mainly neither of shrubs, nor of the birch, nor of the cottonwood, but, as I have already intimated, of the pine, the cedar, the cypress, the spruce, the fir, the larch, and the hemlock. These forests begin almost at the water's edge, and they rise

with regular gradation to a height of two thousand feet. The trees, nowhere dwarfed or diminutive, attain the highest dimensions in sunny exposures in the deeper cañons or gorges of the mountains. The cedar, sometimes called the yellow cedar, and sometimes the fragrant cedar, was long ago imported into China as an ornamental wood; and it now furnishes the majestic beams and pillars with which the richer and more ambitious native chief delights to construct his rude but spacious hall or palatial residence, and upon which he carves in rude symbolical imagery the heraldry of his tribe and achievements of his nation. No beam, or pillar, or spar, or mast, or plank is ever required in either the land or the naval architecture of any civilized State greater in length and width than the trees which can be hewn down on the coasts of the islands and rivers here, and conveyed directly thence by navigation. A few gardens, fields, and meadows, have been attempted by natives in some of the settlements, and by soldiers at the military posts, with most encouraging results. Nor must we forget that the native grasses, ripening late in a humid climate, preserve their nutritive properties, though exposed, while the climate is so mild that cattle and horses require but slight provision of shelter during the winter.

Such is the island and coast portion of Eastern Alaska. Kla-kautch, the Chilcat, who is known and feared by the Indians throughout the whole Territory, and who is a very intelligent chief, informs me, that beyond the mountain range, which intervenes between the Chilcat and the Youkon rivers, you descend into a plain unbroken by hills or mountains, very fertile, in a genial climate, and, as far as he could learn, of boundless extent. We have similar information from

those who have traversed the interior from the shore of the Portland canal to the upper branches of the Youkon. We have reason, therefore, to believe that beyond the coast range of mountains in Alaska we shall find an extension of the rich and habitable valley lands of Oregon, Washington Territory, and British Columbia.

After what I have already said, I may excuse myself from expatiating on the animal productions of the forest. The elk and the deer are so plenty as to be undervalued for food or skins, by natives as well as strangers. The bear of many families—black, grizzly, and cinnamon; the mountain sheep, inestimable for his fleece; the wolf, the fox, the beaver, the otter, the mink, the raccoon, the marten, the ermine; the squirrel—gray, black, brown, and flying, are among the land fur-bearing animals. The furs thus found here have been the chief element, for more than a hundred years, of the profitable commerce of the Hudson's Bay Company, whose mere possessory privileges seem, even at this late day, too costly to find a ready purchaser. This fur-trade, together with the sea fur-trade within the Territory, were the sole basis alike of Russian commerce and empire on this continent. This commerce was so large and important as to induce the Governments of Russia and China to build and maintain a town for carrying on its exchanges in Tartary on the border of the two empires. It is well understood that the supply of furs in Alaska has not diminished, while the demand for them in China and elsewhere has immensely increased.

I fear that we must confess to a failure of ice as an element of territorial wealth, at least as far as this immediate region is concerned. I find that the Rus-

sian American Company, whose monopoly was abolished by the treaty of acquisition, depended for ice exclusively upon the small lake or natural pond which furnishes the power for your saw-mill in this town, and that this dependence has now failed by reason of the increasing mildness of the winter. The California Ice Company are now trying the small lakes of Kodiak, and certainly I wish them success. I think it is not yet ascertained whether glacier ice is pure and practical for commerce. If it is, the world may be supplied from the glaciers, which, suspended from the region of the clouds, stand forth in the majesty of ever-wasting and ever-renewed translucent mountains upon the banks of the Stickeen and Chilcat rivers and the shores of Cross sound.

Alaska has been as yet but imperfectly explored. But enough is known to assure us that it possesses treasures of what are called the baser ores equal to those of any other region of the continent. We have Copper island and Copper river, so named as the places where the natives, before the period of the Russian discovery, had procured the pure metal from which they fabricated instruments of war and legendary shields. In regard to iron, the question seems to be not where it can be found, but whether there is any place where it does not exist. Mr. Davidson, of the Coast Survey, invited me to go up to him at the station he had taken up the Chilcat river to make his observations of the eclipse, by writing me that he had discovered an iron mountain there. When I came there I found that, very properly, he had been studying the heavens so busily, that he had but cursorily examined the earth under his feet; that it was not a single iron mountain he had discovered, but a range of

hills, the very dust of which adheres to the magnet, while the range itself, two thousand feet high, extends along the east bank of the river thirty miles. Limestone and marble crop out on the banks of the same river and in many other places. Coal-beds, accessible to navigation, are found at Kootznoo. It is said, however, that the concentrated resin which the mineral contains renders it too inflammable to be safely used by steamers. In any case, it would seem calculated to supply the fuel requisite for the manufacture of iron. What seems to be excellent cannel coal is also found in the Prince of Wales archipelago. There are also mines at Cook's inlet. Placer and quartz gold mining is pursued under many social disadvantages upon the Stickeen and elsewhere, with a degree of success which, while it does not warrant us in assigning a superiority in that respect to the Territory, does nevertheless warrant us in regarding gold mining as an established and reliable resource.

It would argue inexcusable insensibility if I should fail to speak of the scenery which, in the course of my voyage, has seemed to pass like a varied and magnificent panorama before me. The exhibition did not, indeed, open within the Territory. It broke upon me first when I had passed Cape Flattery and entered the Straits of Fuca, which separate British Columbia from Washington Territory. It widened as I passed along the shore of Puget Sound, expanded in the waters which divide Vancouver from the continent, and finally spread itself out into a magnificent archipelago, stretching through the entire Gulf of Alaska, and closing under the shade of Mounts Fairweather and St. Elias. Nature has furnished to this majestic picture the only suitable border which could be conceived, by lifting the

coast range mountains to an exalted height, and clothing them with eternal snows and crystalline glaciers.

It remains only to speak of man and of society in Alaska. Until the present moment the country has been exclusively inhabited and occupied by some thirty or more Indian tribes. I incline to doubt the popular classification of these tribes, upon the assumption that they have descended from diverse races. Climate and other circumstances have indeed produced some differences of manners and customs between the Aleuts, the Koloschians, and the interior continental tribes. But all of them are manifestly of Mongol origin. Although they have preserved no common traditions, all alike indulge in tastes, wear a physiognomy, and are imbued with sentiments peculiarly noticed in Japan and China. Savage communities, no less than civilized nations, require space for subsistence, whether they depend for it upon the land or upon the sea—in savage communities especially; and increase of population disproportioned to the supplies of the country occupied necessitates subdivision and remote colonization. Oppression and cruelty occur even more frequently among barbarians than among civilized men. Nor are ambition and faction less inherent in the one condition than in the other. From these causes it has happened that the 25,000 Indians in Alaska are found permanently divided into so many insignificant nations. These nations are jealous, ambitious, and violent; could in no case exist long in the same region without mutually affording what, in every case, to each party, seems just cause of war. War between savages becomes the private cause of the several families which are afflicted with the loss of their members. Such a war can never be composed until each family which has suffered receives an indem-

nity in blankets, adjusted according to an imaginary tariff, or, in the failure of such compensation, secures the death of one or more enemies as an atonement for the injury it has sustained. The enemy captured, whether by superior force or strategy, either receives no quarter, or submits for himself and his progeny to perpetual slavery. It has thus happened that the Indian tribes of Alaska have never either confederated or formed permanent alliances, and that even at this late day, in the presence of superior power exercised by the United States Government, they live in regard to each other in a state of enforced and doubtful truce. It is manifest that, under these circumstances, they must steadily decline in numbers, and unhappily this decline is accelerated by their borrowing ruinous vices from the white man. Such as the natives of Alaska are, they are, nevertheless, in a practical sense, the only laborers at present in the Territory. The white man comes amongst them from London, from St. Petersburg, from Boston, from New York, from San Francisco and from Victoria, not to fish (if we except alone the whale fishery) or to hunt, but simply to buy what fish and what peltries, ice, wood, lumber, and coal, the Indians have secured under the superintendence of temporary agents or factors. When we consider how greatly most of the tribes are reduced in numbers, and how precarious their vocations are, we shall cease to regard them as indolent or incapable; and, on the contrary, we shall more deeply regret than ever before, that a people so gifted by nature, so vigorous and energetic, and withal so docile and gentle in their intercourse with the white man, can neither be preserved as a distinct social community, nor incorporated into our society. The Indian tribes will do here

as they seem to have done in Washington Territory and British Columbia: they will merely serve the turn until civilized white men come.

You, the citizens of Sitka, are the pioneers, the advanced guard, of the future population of Alaska; and you naturally ask when, from whence, and how soon, reinforcements shall come, and what are the signs and guaranties of their coming? This question, with all its minute and searching interrogations, has been asked by the pioneers of every State and Territory of which the American Union is now composed; and the history of those States and Territories furnishes the complete, conclusive, and satisfactory answer. Emigrants go to every infant State and Territory in obedience to the great natural law that obliges needy men to seek subsistence, and invites adventurous men to seek fortune where it is most easily obtained, and this is always in the new and uncultivated regions. They go from every State and Territory, and from every foreign nation in America, Europe, and Asia; because no established and populous State or nation can guaranty subsistence and fortune to all who demand them among its inhabitants.

The guaranties and signs of their coming to Alaska are found in the resources of the Territory, which I have attempted to describe, and in the condition of society in other parts of the world. Some men seek other climes for health and some for pleasure. Alaska invites the former class by a climate singularly salubrious, and the latter class by scenery which surpasses in sublimity that of either the Alps, the Apennines, the Alleghanies, or the Rocky Mountains. Emigrants from our own States, from Europe, and from Asia, will not be slow in finding out that fortunes are to be

gained by pursuing here the occupations which have so successfully sustained races of untutored men. Civilization and refinement are making more rapid advances in our day than at any former period. The rising States and nations on this continent, the European nations, and even those of Eastern Asia, have exhausted, or are exhausting, their own forests and mines, and are soon to become largely dependent upon those of the Pacific. The entire region of Oregon, Washington Territory, British Columbia, and Alaska, seem thus destined to become a ship-yard for the supply of all nations. I do not forget on this occasion that British Columbia belongs within a foreign jurisdiction. That circumstance does not materially affect my calculations. British Columbia, by whomsoever possessed, must be governed in conformity with the interests of her people and of society upon the American continent. If that Territory shall be so governed, there will be no ground of complaint anywhere. If it shall be governed so as to conflict with the interests of the inhabitants of that Territory and of the United States, we all can easily foresee what will happen in that case. You will ask me, however, for guaranties that the hopes I encourage will not be postponed. I give them.

Within the period of my own recollection, I have seen twenty new States added to the eighteen which before that time constituted the American Union, and I now see, besides Alaska, ten Territories in a forward condition of preparation for entering into the same great political family. I have seen in my own time not only the first electric telegraph, but even the first railroad and the first steamboat invented by man. And even on this present voyage of mine, I have fallen in

with the first steamboat, still afloat, that thirty-five years ago lighted her fires on the Pacific ocean. These, citizens of Sitka, are the guaranties, not only that Alaska has a future, but that that future has already begun. I know that you want two things just now, when European monopoly is broken down and United States free trade is being introduced within the Territory: These are, military protection while your number is so inferior to that of the Indians around you, and you need also a territorial civil government. Congress has already supplied the first of these wants adequately and effectually. I doubt not that it will supply the other want during the coming winter. It must do this, because our political system rejects alike anarchy and executive absolutism. Nor do I doubt that the political society to be constituted here, first as a Territory, and ultimately as a State or many States, will prove a worthy constituency of the Republic. To doubt that it will be intelligent, virtuous, prosperous, and enterprising, is to doubt the experience of Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, Holland, and Belgium, and of New England and New York. Nor do I doubt that it will be forever true in its republican instincts and loyal to the American Union, for the inhabitants will be both mountaineers and sea-faring men. I am not among those who apprehend infidelity to liberty and the Union in any quarter hereafter, but I am sure that if constancy and loyalty are to fail anywhere, the failure will not be in the States which approach nearest to the north pole.

Fellow-citizens, accept once more my thanks, from the heart of my heart, for kindnesses which can never be forgotten, and suffer me to leave you with a sincere and earnest farewell.

MR. SEWARD'S SPEECH AT VICTORIA.

At a banquet given to Mr. Seward at Victoria, he spoke as follows:

GENTLEMEN: You are aware that if my preference could have been consulted, this would have been a private, instead of a public, entertainment. The asseverations of loyalty which I hear on both sides, from British subjects and resident Americans, admonish us that we are liable to be misunderstood, as assuming to speak for our respective nations in a diplomatic character. Give me your assent, therefore, to a few preliminaries. First, that the loyalty of British subjects here is fully acknowledged and respected on my part. Having derived my existence through a long line of British ancestors, including my father and mother, I am not likely, here or elsewhere, to disparage my lineage of their race. On the other hand, I freely confess that it is my political ambition to see the United States of America, of which I am a native citizen, transcend even the British nation in civil and religious liberty, and usefulness to the human race. Neither Governments nor peoples are particularly pleased when they find private citizens attempting to withdraw their national differences from the control of constitutional agents and adjust them with indecorous haste at provincial dinner tables. We will, therefore, leave the Puget Sound Agricultural question, the San Juan boundary, the Canadian Reciprocity, and the Alabama claims to our respective and respected Governments. I have never heard any person, on either side of the United States border, assert that British Columbia is not a part of the American continent, or that its people have or can have any interest, material, moral, or social, different from the common interests of all Amer-

can nations. Discoverers, indeed, must limit their pretensions by rivers or mountains which they reach, and adjacent States must fix their boundaries as they can agree. Nevertheless, all contiguous States have mutual and intimate relations, which require harmony, if not concert, between them. Upon these their citizens can consult with each other without giving just cause of offense. I have heard in Victoria regrets of an abatement in industrial enterprise in the province, resulting from a disappointment of high-wrought expectations of gold mining on the Frazer river. These regrets have seemed to indicate something of despondency. It is not a special object of my present journey to study British Columbia. The real object is to study the Pacific coast region of the American continent, with more particular reference to the United States. With this purpose I left the sea at Cape Flattery, passed through the Straits of Juan de Fuca, traversed Puget Sound and Washington Territory, and thence made my way by the interior passages through the waters of British Columbia to the sixtieth parallel in Alaska. At no time was I hardly beyond hailing distance from the mainland, and yet my excursion was a continuous voyage of one thousand two hundred miles, through one constant and beautiful archipelago. I occasionally looked up the continental rivers far enough to see that mainland and islands uniformly presented the same features—features which indicate the presence of the precious as well as the baser metals in the mountains, fishes abounding in the seas, furs abounding in the lands and waters, and evergreen forests, useful for all the purposes of land and naval architecture, still more abounding. This whole region I found to be unique and inseparable in regard to the de-

velopment of its rich resources. I venture to call it by one common name, the North Pacific American coast; and I venture to predict that in its entire length and breadth, extending from the banks of the Columbia river, in Oregon, to Mount St. Elias, in Alaska, it will become immediately a common ship-yard for the American continent, and speedily for the whole world. Europe, Asia, South America, and even the Atlantic American States, have either exhausted or are exhausting their native supplies of timber and lumber. Their last and only resort must be to the North Pacific region I have described. I noticed with pleasure and without surprise the beginning of a whale fishery in Puget Sound, and I discoursed in the Spanish language with lumber traders from Chili. The scenes of industry I witnessed along the sound astonished me when I reflected that the entire population of Washington Territory is only eight thousand souls. The European emigrant has hardly reached that coast, and the Chinese are scarcely known there. In their absence the Indians seemed to be assuming the habits of civilization, in obedience to an extraordinary demand for labor. Sagacious persons in the Atlantic States and in Europe were before me in apprehending this interesting condition of things, and I think in foreseeing the destiny of the North Pacific shores. They had already projected railroads calculated to concentrate the necessary labor upon the shores of Puget Sound, where the steamboats are ready to distribute it throughout the whole archipelago. This distribution is inevitable. The lumber and metals of Puget Sound are indeed vast and magnificent. They might for a time supply the local demand of the Pacific American shore, but they are altogether inadequate to the wider commer-

cial demand which is already beginning to press upon us. Alaska has stores far surpassing in extent and variety those of Puget Sound, Washington, and Oregon. Nor is British Columbia either destitute or inferior in the same natural resources. British Columbia, therefore, wants nothing that is not wanted also in Oregon, Washington, and Alaska—population and capital. Of these two, population always goes first, and capital speedily follows. Into this broad field of activity and enterprise I take the liberty to invite the people of British Columbia to enter, as copartners if they will, as rivals if they must. I pray you, gentlemen, to consider that the long ages, when communities pervaded by common interests could be separated in their commerce, have come to an end. Steam on land and sea and the electric telegraph have leveled the mountains and bridged the ocean. Japan, China, and Australia, are already adjacent, and commercially bound to the American Pacific coast. Only two works remain to connect Europe and the Atlantic coast completely and indissolubly with the same great Pacific coast, the extinguishment of the colonial system of continental Europe in the West Indies, and the construction of a ship canal, adequate to modern navigation, across the Isthmus of Darien. I find myself, gentlemen, tempted to transgress the bounds of your courteous patience. My entrance into Victoria a month ago was a bewilderment, resulting from the encountering only of strangers. My parting from it is not unattended with regret, because I seem to be leaving only assured and tried friends. Accept my thanks for your generous hospitalities, together with the assurance of my earnest desire for the welfare of British Columbia and for your individual prosperity and happiness.

MR. SEWARD'S SPEECH IN SALEM, OREGON.

The older States, situated eastward of the Missouri and below the base of the Rocky Mountains, have complete industrial, social, and political systems, and fixed habits. The traveller there is intrusive if, under any persuasion, he attempts to speak of their peculiar resources, policies, or duties. Deference to this principle determined me, when I left Auburn, to make no wayside speeches during my present journey. The magnet, when brought into the presence of iron, finds it no harder to maintain its own polarity than I have found it to adhere to my prudent resolution ever since I passed the banks of the Mississippi. I am travelling in regions grand and vast, but comparatively new, and among communities incompletely organized, needful of immigration and capital, and therefore ambitious that their resources, advantages, and attractions may be made known. Art has seldom produced a more striking picture than the abandoned infant Hercules defending himself against serpents in his cradle. How poor that admired conception appears when contrasted with the precarious but energetic and successful vigor and energy of emigrants from the Atlantic shores settling and establishing new States—members of the American Republic—in the native forests, wildernesses, and deserts which extend across the American continent! Relying upon their own energies, as all the States of this Union at every stage of their existence must rely, they disdain the sympathy of all foreign nations. Do they require too much in asking that their capacities and loyalty to the Union shall be known and appreciated? I early accepted and continually held fast to these several political convictions: 1st, That if a nation

desires to be independent and prosperous, and enjoy peace at home and abroad, it must expand itself commensurately with its resources and advantages. 2d, That human bondage is incompatible with a successful republic. 3d, That the permanent continuance of European or monarchical government in the American hemisphere would be injurious and dangerous to the United States. 4th, That in the expansion of the Republic, the establishment and acceptance of new States, on the same footing as the original States, is essential for the security of civil and religious liberty. I seem, indeed, to myself, to have lived chiefly for the purpose of laboring to defend an inchoate republic against external and internal dangers, and to expand it upon the principles I have mentioned. Let the world judge, then, of the satisfaction I enjoy in witnessing the success of this policy, and of the gratitude I feel in being so kindly received here, at the capital of the new State of Oregon, as I have been received before at the capitals of the other new States and Territories which I have visited. You will excuse me, if the habit of nationality of thought and reasoning which I have contracted has rendered me incapable of considering Oregon as an isolated State, or of separating my ideas of her condition and products from the general ideas which I have formed of all the States and Territories, mutually connected with each other, and subordinate in their proper relations as parts of the whole United States. In California there is no longer need for external encouragement. The highest expectations of its settlers have not unjustly ripened into absolute assurance. San Francisco is firmly established as the Constantinople of American empire, and California exercises fully and wisely an important political

influence in the United States and throughout the world. The other new States and Territories have not yet secured an equal position. The dwellers in these States are continually asking of every visitor, "What do you think we shall be, and when?" I must answer with the same confidence which, among men of little faith, has sometimes procured for me the character of an optimist. Kansas, in her infancy the Cinderella, has already become a leading and effective member of the political family by which she was despised. Nebraska, standing upon the west side of the Missouri, has seized the railroads of the Atlantic States, and welded and riveted them with the system of railroads which has successfully begun to traverse and ramify the States and Territories of the Pacific shore. Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico, surmounting Indian troubles and reckless speculations, have reached a point of civil and social establishment from which it need not be feared they will recede. I have not yet been able to visit Arizona, but I have learned enough of Montana, Idaho, and Utah, to know that they are reasonably assured of a successful and prosperous career. Nevada, although politically separated from California, is a full sharer in her rising prosperity and greatness. Considerations of convenience, not choice, carried me northward before I was able to visit Oregon. The Territories of Washington and Alaska, extending (with the exception of British Columbia) from the forty-ninth parallel of latitude along the islands and coasts of America to the Arctic ocean, are, as might be expected, feebler than the more southern States and Territories. Nevertheless, I realized, if indeed I did not discover, in those Territories a new, peculiar, and magnificent field of commerce and empire. I found one continuous and

expanding archipelago along the coast, from the base of Puget Sound, in Washington, to Mount St. Elias, in Alaska. I found land and sea teeming with provisions for the subsistence of a population adequate to bring the marine, mineral, animal, and vegetable resources of that remote and secluded region into a productive State. The neglected portion of the country furnishes even now, to refined nations in northern climates, the furs which, from considerations of need and of luxury, they continually demand. No metal used in arts or commerce is absent there. The forests are luxuriant, universal, and inexhaustible. When I saw British, Chinese, and Chilian, as well as American vessels, bearing away the timber and lumber, with difficulty wrested from the wasting fires of the summer by the feeblest of all American populations, and conveying them away to be used in civil and naval architecture on both sides of the Pacific ocean, I needed no other suggestion of the fact that I had reached that very place where, within the period of an early future, the navies, mercantile and armed, of America, and even of the world, are to be built. Knowing the importance of ship-building and navigation in every stage of civilization, my mind was expanded with wonder and admiration of the ultimate prosperity and greatness of the north Pacific coast.

Although British Columbia remains, as Oregon not long ago was, and as the region west of the Mississippi so recently was, and as the whole of the United States once were, subject to a European Power, I, nevertheless, found existing there commercial and political forces which render a permanent political separation of British Columbia from Alaska and Washington Territory impossible.

Of Washington Territory, so lately a part of Oregon, it is hardly necessary to say here, that the British traveller was not mistaken, who, in 1836, not foreseeing its severance from the British crown, pronounced Puget Sound a base of future empire.

In the State of Oregon I have only explored the Columbia river to the Dalles, and the Willamette valley, in the vicinity of Portland, Milwaukee, Oswego, Oregon City, Monmouth, Albany, Santiam, and this capital. No one will accuse me of infidelity to New York and the other Atlantic States, whether North or South. Nevertheless, I shall not hesitate, hereafter, to advise the student in natural science, who desires to learn how islands, mountains, and countries are heaved up from the deep; how rivers are traced out, defined, and run; how minerals are secreted in the earth; and how valleys are formed, spread out, and fertilized, to ascend the Columbia river from the sea, through its cascades and cataracts, to its sources in the interior of the continent. Nor shall I fail to advise the tourist, who delights in the grand and the beautiful, to leave behind him the Rhine and the Hudson, after seeing the one marvel of Niagara, and to come here and admire the snow-clad mountains which dominate over the Pacific coast. Wonderful, horizontal, and massive foundations lie all along the river banks, in the shape of wharves, docks, ports, and gateways. On these everlasting foundations are raised, not merely one column of basaltic palisade, but terraces of basaltic palisades, which, rising one above another, and assuming the magnificent outlines of towers, pinnacles, castles, coliseums, and cathedrals, seem to pierce the very clouds.

The early emigrants saw, as they descended the Rocky Mountains, boundless and luxuriant prairies,

watered by the Willamette, and a spacious forest region traversed by the Columbia—plains, forests, and rivers unequalled on the Pacific coast. That coast, northward and southward, was occupied by inert races, from whom the settlers of Oregon apprehended no rivalry. They, therefore, expected that some sea-port in their own Territory would become the principal seat of the western commerce. This expectation is disappointed. The opening of sea-ports, with inland connections, at the base of the northwestern archipelago on Puget sound, indicates the commercial development there to which I have already alluded. San Francisco, with its magnificent bay and fortified Golden Gate, has taken the position which before was erroneously assigned to Astoria, at the mouth of the Columbia river. So it has happened that Oregon proper has failed to obtain the capital prize in the commercial lottery of the Pacific coast. It ought to be enough, however, to reconcile the people of Oregon to that disappointment, to know that the central position of the State, between and contiguous to the two great commercial out-posts of the Pacific, affords her the advantage of being at once the granary and manufactory for both. It is in Oregon, so far as I am able to determine, and nowhere else, that two climates—the Atlantic, with its heated summers and inclement winters, and the Pacific, with its colder summers and milder winters—embrace and produce a higher and more varied fertility than is elsewhere realized. The Atlantic States, with their grassy valleys, are already becoming dependent upon the slopes of the Rocky Mountains for the supply of animal provisions. The fruits of Oregon are unsurpassed in quality and unequalled in abundance. Wheat and other cereals grow and ripen here, almost without care, as abundantly

as they do with the use of irrigation in Utah, while the native soil, everywhere covered with fern and annual flowers, provokes the farmer to the cultivation of the potato and other esculent roots. What acquaintance I have made with the adventurous miners, descending the Columbia river, satisfies me, that if it were possible for the laborer to fail in other occupations, he would, even in that case, find an abundant reward in the gold deposits of the mountains. The useful metals and minerals abound everywhere, while a vast hydraulic power, invaluable under all circumstances and indispensable in new communities, is distributed throughout all parts of the State. I know, indeed, that the present dwellers in California and Washington think that they possess forest, agricultural, and manufacturing advantages and resources commensurate with the future which they anticipate. My own observation of the ever-increasing exigencies of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore. and Boston—Paris, Liverpool, and London—is conclusive with me upon the subject. The territorial lines which divide one political jurisdiction into distinct States not unnaturally tend to circumscribe and confuse our ideas of the future of each of the several States. No one would be satisfied with the prospect of Oregon if it were included within the political jurisdiction of California, and if it had continued to retain the shores of Puget Sound. It is hardly necessary to say, on the other hand, that the political subdivision of the region tends not to diminish, but to magnify, the prosperity of every part.

Such is the future which I argue for the State of Oregon. This destiny, of course, exacts, just as the future of every part of the United States always does, an increase of the population and capital. I regard

this condition as already secured. Population will seek and find every place, even those most remote and least known, where industry, already organized and established, assures to the laborer a certain reward. One need only to look into Portland, Dalles City, Oregon City, and other towns, to see that capital is profitably employed. One need only to look over the fields and orchards in the agricultural districts, and upon the vessels engaged in inland transportation on the Willamette, to enable him to foresee a speedy subdivision of immense farms among multiplied emigrants. Nevertheless, population is not to be grown here or elsewhere in one country in sufficient numbers and with sufficient haste. It must everywhere be induced from abroad. It will not go anywhere until its going can be made cheap and easy by improved transportation. The Columbia river and the Willamette, although noble streams, cannot, unaided, perform the work. They do not penetrate the sources of emigration, nor adequately distribute it through the State. They must be reinforced with railroads—first, railroad to San Francisco and Puget Sound, where the immediate consumers of your agricultural products will dwell; next, railroads through the mining regions, intersecting the existing Pacific railroad and such others as shall be built. The receivers of your productions along and at the ends of such railroads will forward, in return, the emigrants and laborers whom you will require in increasing the productions. Nor would you hasten the future of your State, which I regard as the common interest of the whole Republic, by suffering yourselves to be involved as partisans in the local and personal passions, ambitions, and jealousies of other communities. No State or nation has ever flourished that was unsocial, inhospitable.

pitiable, or intolerant. Your statesmen in the national councils, if they are wise, will foster and cultivate harmony and peace equally throughout the whole Republic, and harmony and peace equally with all foreign nations, insisting at the same time, as is their right, upon a policy at home and abroad which shall be adapted to the interest of the Pacific. Such a policy will require that the United States shall own and possess self-producing islands on your coast, and sugar and coffee-producing islands in both oceans, and will regard the extension of American invention and enterprise into Japan, China, Australia, and India, as worthy of consideration equally with international commerce between the United States and the countries of Western Europe. I found in your morning paper yesterday the following dispatch: "The ship *Norway* arrived on the 4th of September, one hundred and fifty-seven days from Cardiff. This ship brings iron for ten miles of the East Side road, being the first installment of two thousand tons, purchased by Ben Holladay & Co. The rest is on another vessel, which is due in thirty days, if she makes an average voyage." This mere transaction suggests what Oregon and the whole Pacific coast need: 1st, such manufacture of your own metals as will relieve you from the necessity of importing iron from any foreign country; and, 2d, the construction of a ship canal across the Isthmus of Darien, which will reduce the navigation between the Pacific shores and those of the Atlantic, of both continents, a hundred and twenty days.

I know too well that political, religious, and social objections are made against the policy of freedom and immigration which I advocate. But such objections are as old as the Republic. They have assisted, and

at times threatened to strangle or arrest, this great policy, which was wisely engrafted upon the Constitution of the United States. What would have been our condition now, and our prospects, if the country had listened to objections of the same nature against the abolition of African slavery—a measure to which we are indebted for entire and complete national independence? What if we had yielded to the fiery resistance made to that Irish immigration which has constructed so many of our canals and railroads, and built so many of our cities? What if we had been prevailed upon to repel and reject that great German immigration which has given a new impulse to our arts, our literature, and our science? We have no excuse for admitting such objections or prejudices now. The experiment of self-government which we are making has developed its own necessary conditions and laws. We could not escape from them even if we would. The experiment we are making, fellow-citizens, is not a local or isolated experiment, whether the people of one nation are capable of self-government. It is the experiment whether men of all nations are capable of self-government. Let us persevere in it, relying that mankind in every country only need freedom and knowledge to enable them to govern themselves more wisely and more happily than they have hitherto been governed.

Citizens of Oregon, it is long since we have known, though it is only just now that we have met, each other. I have been made profoundly sensible of this fact by your invitation, which found me at sea; by the welcome given me on arrival in port; by the reception and munificent hospitalities bestowed upon me in your great commercial city of Portland; by the

hospitalities, State and municipal, of this interesting capital; and by wayside entertainments in the village, at the ferry, at the cross-roads, and in the farm-house. If my presumption were equal to my gratitude, I should not fail to invoke, forever, blessings fit for all sorts and conditions of men, upon Oregon.